



EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CENTRE

Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Learning and Teaching (Level 7)

Flexible Learning

2011

<i>SMS Code</i>	LT702001		
<i>Level</i>	7	<i>Credits</i>	10
<i>Total Learning Hours</i>	100	<i>Contact Hours</i>	40
<i>Work Experience Hours</i>	nil	<i>Self Directed Hours</i>	60

Introduction

In this course you are offered a mix of online and face-to-face learning methods. Attendance at the class sessions is optional; however, the class activities and assessment rely on interaction with your peers. This will occur via class blogs, web conferencing and face to face workshops. There will be a mix of activities and self-directed work. Overall you can expect to spend on average 5-6 hours to week studying in this subject over one semester.

Online material is located on WikiEducator, an open access wiki platform (Course wiki). A Course Blog will be used for weekly announcements and to link you to individuals' blogs.

Links: The links to materials on the Course wiki, the Course Blog and web conferencing will be sent on email.

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Aim

To enhance the understanding of flexible teaching and learning principles and processes, and their application to the design of flexible learning practices.

Learning Outcomes

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss principles and processes of flexible teaching and learning to facilitate culture sensitive adult learning;
- Critique the design and application of existing flexible teaching and learning options in relation to the literature;
- Analyse and evaluate challenges that arise in the design of flexible learning environments;
- Explore and justify the strategies for the development of flexible learning environments;
- Create and evaluate a plan for the implementation of a flexible learning experience.

Topics and Timetable for 2011

Weeks 1 - 7	Class sessions	Topics
1 . 28 February to 6 March Introduction to Flexible Learning (FL)	Workshop: 2 March Onsite: 10:00-12:00 Venue: Web conference: 3 March: 15:00-17:00	Orientation to the course and the class participants in a workshop – choose either time. Activity one: Set up blog and introduce yourself and your work.
2. 7 to 13 March What is Flexible Learning?		Discuss the concepts of flexibility in learning (five dimensions). Activity two –Define FL in your context, and discuss reasons for using flexible approaches.
3. 14 to 20 March Trends and Examples of Flexible Learning	Workshop: 16 March Onsite: 10:00-12:00 Venue: Web conference: 17 March: 15:00-16:30	Explore examples of FL – blended, online, RPL. Activity three – Investigate and describe an example of FL in your organisation.
4. & 5. (2 wks) 21 March to 3 April Concepts of Flexible Learning: Access & equity Diversity & Inclusivity	Self-directed work	Considerations for ensuring access to all learners and factors of diversity (gender, socioeconomic, ethnicity, learning etc.) will be discussed. Your learners' preferences and abilities will be discussed. Activity four –Define and describe this week's concepts in your professional context.
6. 4 to 10 April Designing strategies for Flexible Learning	Workshop: 6 April Onsite: 10:00-12:00 Venue: Web conference: 7 April: 15:00-16:30	Approaches to designing strategies for FL. Activity five – Design and describe FL strategies for your context.
7. 11 to 17 April Planning Flexible Learning	Self-directed work	Discuss ideas and strategies for your Flexible Learning plan. Activity six – Continue developing the Flexible Learning plan on your blog using the template.
Easter break and mid term break - 18 April to 1 May (2 weeks)		

Weeks 8 - 17	Class sessions	Topics
8. 2 to 8 May Concepts of Flexible Learning: Open Education Resources (OER)	Web conference presentation: 5 May: 15:00-16:30	Investigate the OER Guide, and select an aspect to explore. Activity seven – Define OER in your context, and describe an aspect you could use.
9. 9 to 15 May Flexible Learning & adult learning theory	Self-directed work	Explore adult learning theory, and choose one to underpin FL in your context. Activity eight – Describe the learning theory underpinning your plan.
10. 16 to 22 May Sustainable Flexible Learning	Workshop: 18 May Onsite: 10:00-12:00 Venue: Web conference: 19 May: 15:00-16:30	Investigate ways to ensure sustainable methods are used for learning. Activity nine – Define and describe this week's concept in your professional context.
11. 23 to 29 May Organisational policy & strategy	Self-directed work	Factors in your organisation which might influence flexible learning are investigated. Activity ten - Outline how your FL plan fits within your organisational strategy.
12. 30 May to 5 June Concepts of Flexible Learning: Cultural sensitivity & indigenous learners	Workshop: 1 June 10:00-12:00 Venue: Web conference: 2 June 15:00 – 16:30	Indigenous learners and flexible learning. For example critical success factors for Maori and Pacific Island students will be explored. Activity eleven - Define and describe this week's concepts in your professional context.
13. & 14. (2 wks) 6 to 19 June Your Flexible Learning Plan	Web conference tutorial: 9 June 15:00 – 16:00	Assessment: Work on finalising your flexible learning plan on your blog over the next two weeks. Choose a format for the presentation and prepare your presentation for the mini-conference .
15. 20 to 26 June Mini-conference	Mini-conference: 22 June 10:00-12:30 Venue:	Assessment: Present your final Flexible Learning plan – face-to-face or online. Final date for submission of assessments: 1 July 2011

Assessment

There is *one* assessment in two parts.

1. Development of a Flexible Learning plan.
2. Presentation of the final Flexible Learning plan.

You must successfully complete *both* parts of the assessment to be awarded a *pass* in the course. Marks are not allocated for the assessment, only a pass or not passed. One re-submission is possible if a pass is not obtained the first time.

Please note: you must request an extension before the due date.

Assessment Instructions and Marking Criteria

The assessment and marking criteria are described below.

1. Development of a Flexible Learning plan.

Your ideas for the Flexible Learning plan are developed using an individual blog. You will be guided to do this through a series of activities to help you build your plan. Instructions for the activities are located in brief on the timetable, and in detail on the course wiki. Your blog will provide a record of your learning, and become the main vehicle for interacting with other members of the class. The first two activities are outlined here to start you off. Reminders about the activities will be posted on the Course blog as the course progresses.

Note: All the work you do for the activities must be posted on your blog.

Activity one: Set up a blog* and introduce yourself

- Tell the class something about you as a person, where you work and your goals for this course.
- Describe the reasons you are using, or need to introduce a *Flexible Learning*¹ approach in your workplace.
- Post to your blog.

* **Suggestion:** for the blog– use blogger.com, or wordpress.com – detailed instructions are on the course wiki.

Activity two: Find yourself a buddy in the class, and discuss the following questions:

- What does the term Flexible Learning mean to you?
- Why is it necessary to use a more flexible approach in your work?
- What do you need to explore to help this happen?
- What goals do you have for using Flexible Learning in your work?
- Post responses to your blog.

2. Presentation of the Flexible Learning plan

- Choose how you present the final plan.
 - It can be online – synchronous (using web conferencing), or asynchronous (slide show, blog etc.) - or face-to-face at the mini-conference at the end of the course.

¹ You will be guided to develop a definition and philosophy for Flexible Learning in the course.

- For example, you may choose to use a digital slide show, video, audio, written piece, blog, wiki, verbal description in person, poster etc., to present your plan.
- Providing your final plan in an open format will enable others to learn from your work. ☺
- Indicate how feedback from others has influenced your plan.

Marking criteria

Achievement of the following criteria will result in a successful pass for this assessment:

- Progression of ideas and understanding about concepts of Flexible Learning while developing the plan is evident.
- Definition and philosophy of Flexible Learning as part of adult learning theory is expressed.
- Ideas and concepts are discussed and underpinned by theoretical evidence, correctly cited.
- Provides meaningful feedback to other participants about their plans.
- The final plan is presented to the class and includes the following areas (from the template):
 - Introduction, aim, background – reasons more flexibility is needed, examples which have inspired the plan and the fit within the organisation.
 - Strategies to introduce flexibility are explained in detail with rationale.
 - Concepts of Flexible Learning are covered - Access and Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity, Sustainability, Open Education, Cultural Sensitivity.
 - Concluding remarks and what needs to be done to action the Flexible Learning Plan.
 - References in APA format - preferred.

Final date for submission of assessments:

1 July 2011

Flexible Learning Plan Template and Guidelines

Introduction

Provide an overview of what will be covered in the presentation. Define Flexible Learning in your context.

Aim

State what you intend to achieve with the plan, in one or two sentences.

Background

Describe the learning environment you work in. Outline the reasons flexibility is necessary, and the factors which have stimulated change.

Concepts of Flexible Learning – Access and Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity

Provide a definition for each concept and the relevance in your professional context. Explain how you will ensure all your learners can access the learning environment you have created.

Concepts of Flexible Learning: Open Education and Sustainability

Provide a definition for each concept and the relevance in your professional context. Outline the strategies you intend to use to ensure these concepts are addressed.

Overview of Strategies

Summarise the approach you will use to ensure flexibility in the learning environment, and the importance for your organisation.

Adult educational theory

Outline the adult educational theory on which you have based your plan.

Concepts of Flexible Learning: Cultural Sensitivity & Indigenous Learners

Provide a definition for this concept and the relevance in your professional context. Outline aspects of the Maori Strategic Framework which underpin your approach.

Conclusion: *Round off the presentation with a concluding remark and a “where to from here” statement.*

References: *This is a list of readings and websites you have used to create your plan. Please use an APA referencing format.*